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THE MONROE DOCTRINE IN 1881.

IN a late number of this REVIEW—September, 1881—the historical development of the “Monroe Declaration” was stated. That declaration was shown to be especially applicable to the international conditions then existing. Its formula was more limited than that recommended by some of the chief counselors of the President. He, acting under the influence of his great responsibility and his characteristic caution, was content to satisfy the immediate demands of his time. Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson, with far-reaching foresight, would establish the principle in terms broad enough to embrace the needs of the future.

The object of this article is to show the later expansion of the principle, and to affirm the necessity of its application to-day in the broader sense indicated by both Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Adams.

The Cabinet of 1823 was alarmed by the despotic announcements of the powers at Laybach and at Troppau. These furnished a powerful motive of its decision. The imperial coalition had proclaimed at Laybach that they regarded every reform effected by means of an insurrection as null, and contrary to the public laws of Europe; and that they would pursue rebellion everywhere, and under whatever form it should show itself. At Troppau they went so far as to affirm that, by divine law,

VOL. CXXXIII.—NO. 301.

36

European nations had the imprescriptible right to put themselves in open hostility against states which, by a change of their institutions or their government, offered a dangerous example. These principles clearly touched the life of every American republic; and in 1823 they were forcibly applied to the suppression of the parliamentary system of the Spanish monarchy, and then threatened the colonies. It is quite credible that at that period only the great waste of the Atlantic waters saved the American republics from a conflict for their national life. Even this wide desert boundary did not save Mexico so late as 1864-'5 from the vital struggle between European and American political systems.

It may be admitted that the principles in question, as declared by Mr. Monroe, were limited to these two points: *First*. That no foreign power should establish thereafter, as of their own right, a colony within the territories of any of the *de facto* independent states of America, meaning thereby to include all parts of both continents not at that time held as colonial possessions. *Second*. That no European power should attempt by force to introduce monarchical institutions into any American territory, or otherwise interfere to oppress the American states, or control their independent development.

Señor Calvo, in his late treatise on international law, after a review of the principles of Mr. Monroe's message, of the international conditions which preceded it, and of the Congressional discussions which followed it, states its points touching colonization as follows: "*First*. That the European colonial system is inapplicable to the new situation of America, because all parts of the American continents are inhabited by civilized nations, which, in respect to their independence, and to alien sovereignty over them, have absolutely the same title as European nations. *Second*. That the questions of boundary between the ancient European establishments and the new American states can only be settled according to the general principles of international law. *Third*. That the first occupation or first exploration creates now no longer any right of sovereignty over the American territories, whose rightful sovereignty can only result, in the future, from a treaty or from war. In this last point of view we may say that American public law is the same as that of Europe, and rests exactly upon the same basis."

If Europe had frankly accepted Mr. Monroe's declarations in their spirit, we should have had no occasion to re-affirm his

principles, or to enlarge the terms of their statement. But Europe has not done so. Chili has had complaints touching colonizations attempted on her extreme southern and inhospitable borders. England has asserted claims in Central America which have caused us troublesome and dangerous complications. France and Austria, at first assisted by Spain and England, have made a serious assault upon Mexico, to control her independence and to change her government. They have not respected our demand for non-interference in the internal affairs of this hemisphere. Some of them still seek possessions here. They have forced us to vigilance. Calvo is probably right in saying that the letter of the Monroe Declaration leaves open the question of colonial acquisitions by war or by treaty. Nevertheless, beyond our own territory, our interest is exclusively with the fact of colonization, no matter by what mode or claim of right. Our interests are affected by the *fact*. Whether they change a sovereign jurisdiction on a part of our continent, or effect other interference, by direct war, or by the instrumentality of a charter granted by them to their subjects, with retained power of control; whether they act by intimidation, by force, by finesse, or by purchase, it is the resulting *fact* with which we have to deal. It is that which touches our interests, and changes our existing relations with the territory affected.

Cannot a European nation, then, make wars or treaties with an independent American state? Certainly. But should their result involve unnecessary detriment to our national interests, or threaten our national security, public law and precedent concede to us the right to protest, and to enforce that protest by defensive action. European diplomacy is full of precedents for the right of intervention in such cases. The entire "balance-of-power" theory, whose discussions fill the modern diplomatic history of Europe, starts from that principle. We need go no farther to seek a precedent than in Mr. Canning's proposals to Mr. Rush for joint action against the anticipated projects of France, in 1823. These projects involved no direct assault on England or the United States. They were directed exclusively to territories of a third power, and threatened a change, simply, in a foreign country, which France might obtain by cession, or as indemnity for war.

It is no longer for us a question of despotism extending its sphere of supremacy to America. It is a question now of com-

mercial rivalry and commercial advantages. Covetous eyes are cast on outlying islands and continental coasts of Central and South America. A steam-ship line is preferred to an army; a canal to a fortification; a good harbor to a strong citadel. One far-sighted government, eager for the extension of its foreign trade and naval influence, has initiated negotiations for the transfer to it of a seemingly unimportant but really commanding tract of waste land. The weak government approached may be disposed to yield. The islands of the Central, the Pacific, and the Southern seas have become objects of special interest and examination to more than one of the naval and commercial powers of the Old World. At least two of the Continental powers have been looking diligently for new colonial stations across or in the world of Western waters. The unhappy and repeated dissensions and irregularities of the Central and South American states furnish too many occasions for foreign interference and foreign claims of indemnity. Their resulting financial condition offers too strong temptation to relieve embarrassments by the expropriation of territorial rights and privileges. It is easy to find occasion for a naval war, if any European power desires a pretext for the seizure of a port or a territory. The recognized doctrine of a war indemnity stands in aid of the acquisitive purpose. To establish a colonial dependency in America by treaty, or as a result of war,—these alternatives, according to Señor Calvo, remain to the European nations without violating the principle of the Monroe Declaration.

Europe would be misled by the acceptance of that view, and still more deceived by accepting it as indicating the principles distinctly held on this subject by the United States during the last thirty years.

The original declaration was limited, in words, by the circumstances of that epoch. The reasons upon which it was founded provided room for a further development and extension of the declaration. This Government has from time to time indicated this development, and shown its desire to preserve always toward the ambitious commercial powers of Europe an attitude of candor and dignity, while defending its own rights and interests. There was no display of mere sentiment against monarchical institutions in America. On the contrary, our Government recognized the imperial establishment of Itur-

bide in Mexico, and of Dom Pedro in Brazil, because both were by free choice of the people, and were home powers. Indeed, the Brazilian diplomatic agent told Mr. Adams that the Brazilian Emperor was more republican than the people whom he ruled. On the other hand, we have always claimed that it was our material interests which demanded the maintenance of the American principle of non-colonization by Europe on the Western continents. While acknowledging existing colonial rights, Mr. Adams was of opinion that "we could not see with indifference any attempt . . . to transfer any portion of the ancient or present American possessions of Spain to any other European power." Mr. Rush was ready to unite with Mr. Caning in declaring that "we could not see any portion of them transferred to any other power with indifference." Mr. Jefferson advised President Monroe—facing a possible war for the principle—"to establish the American system of keeping out of our land all foreign powers; of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations"; and to oppose, "most especially, their transfer [of the Spanish-American possessions] to any power by conquest, cession, or acquisition in any other way."

Our own happy condition is not, unfortunately, that of all our neighbors of this hemisphere. It will not be theirs for many years to come. Their weakness has invited, their internal disorders have provoked, the acquisitive passions of several European governments. The persistent interference of the British in Nicaragua has been one long vexation to that weak nation, to our Government, and to our interests in Central America. Through it all, our Government asserted the non-colonization principle. It was not settled, though earnestly desired, by the Anglo-Nicaraguan treaty of 1860, which is itself at this time the subject of arbitration. In 1848, Yucatan, too weak to suppress by her own arms the general insurrection of her uncivilized Indians, appealed to England and to Spain for help. This being refused, she offered to the United States her sovereignty in exchange for the required assistance. Mexico claimed this sovereignty; and our Government, although at war with her, refused the offer, but proposed to aid this detached state of the Mexican federation. President Polk, in his message of December, 1845, after approving the Monroe Declaration, had said that it should be distinctly announced to the world as our settled

policy, that "no future European colony or dominion shall, with our consent, be planted or established on any part of the American continent." On this occasion, in 1848, in his message on the subject of Yucatan, he further declared that "we could not consent to a transfer of this dominion and sovereignty, either to Spain, Great Britain, or any other European power; . . . it would be dangerous to our peace and security if it should become a colony of any European nation."

The attempt to plant an Austro-French empire in Mexico is so recent as to need little explanation. It was a conception of the French Emperor, which he hoped to execute during our civil war, and by its success not only to obtain commercial advantages, but to discredit the republican system in America and break its prestige in Europe. It furnished an occasion to manifest again, and in a practical way, the adhesion of our Government to the principles announced forty years previously. The representations of our Government to both France and Austria were explicit, and, after the spring of 1865, very resolute in their tone toward the imperial cabinet at Paris. In fact, the French-American relations became at one time very delicate; we had an army of observation on the Mexican frontier, and the second in rank of our army officers was ordered to the side of President Juarez in Mexico. A direct engagement was finally made by the French Government to the American for the definitive withdrawal of the French troops in a limited time. The Emperor promised for the future non-interference in Mexican affairs. That sad chapter of the history of European intervention in America presents one relief of color to an otherwise melancholy picture. It informed the governments of Europe how impossible it is for them to govern Americans, and how impracticable it is to extend their system to the New World. The attempt will not probably be repeated, except for colonization in smaller territories or isolated possessions.

It may be very positively affirmed that the underlying motive of the non-colonization principle was and is the danger which European dominions in America offer to our material interests, both in peace and in war. It means a flanking position, a military and naval rendezvous, in time of war, and an exclusive commercial position in time of peace. Rights of commerce and navigation, often questioned, are referred to a distant government for settlement. Such questions, arising on one continent

and referred to another and distant continent for adjustment, always find the European tribunal of appeal to be dilatory, slowly informed, and hesitating in action. Justice, halting and reluctant, moves with slow steps across the seas.

It was largely, if not chiefly, to avoid this danger, that President Adams advised the participation of the United States in the Panama Congress. In his message of March, 1826, speaking of the advantages we derived from independent American states, he says: "The United States enjoy the right of commercial intercourse with every part of their possessions. To attempt the establishment of a colony in those possessions would be to usurp, to the exclusion of others, a commercial intercourse which was the common possession of all. It could not be done without encroaching upon existing rights of the United States." He further declares that, among the subjects of consultation proposed at Panama, was "the means of making effectual the assertion of that principle"; and he looked for mutual pledges, each nation for itself, "to permit no colonial lodgment, or establishment of European jurisdiction, upon its own soil." That policy had been urged also upon Mexico, in a separate correspondence conducted by Mr. Clay as Secretary of State. It was adopted by the four states represented at Panama.

But, leaving the domain of authority and precedent, let us further examine it upon the grounds of reason.

What argument exists, on our part, to support an objection to Central or South American colonization by Europe under claim of "prior discovery," which does not equally militate against colonization effected by war, or secured by a cession of territory? Our own territorial rights being untouched, in what way are *we* more injured by the former than by the latter? In either case, it excludes or constrains our commercial interests as secured by existing treaties. In either case, it creates for us a new and unwelcome neighbor, and new relations. If secured by one of the naval powers, it exposes us to a new military danger. If accomplished by a great power, it compels the increase of our own military or naval preparations to preserve our equality in the event of war. If near our great lines of commerce, it becomes a standing menace to our commercial life. It touches every national interest. It is self-evident that we could not regard such an establishment, in whatever way of peace or war effected, "with indifference"—as the diplomatists put it. It would it

ought to, cause serious inquietude to our Government. Need we recall again the Nicaraguan dispute, which brought us to the verge of war? Do we not remember the squadron dispatched to the Antilles by the British Government, when they believed France was seeking to acquire Cuba by cession, and Mr. Canning's protest against that cession? Yet that could affect England in no sense equal to the effect upon us of the acquisition by a great European power of Cuba, or of any other strong position, insular or continental, commanding either side of Central America, or the chief lines of our commercial routes along this or the Southern continent.

In another respect any new European acquisition on this continent would touch very seriously our important interests. Delegated authority, exercised across distant seas, is the occasion of frequent misunderstandings and commercial embarrassments. The reparation or remedy is referred to a distant government, and is tediously obtained, if obtained at all. A supreme government in immediate contact obviates this danger of disturbance to commerce and to amicable relations. Canada and Cuba have repeatedly illustrated, and amply, the justice of this ground of objection to further colonial establishments in this hemisphere. It is not long since one of these questions in connection with Cuba cost us four millions in preparation to secure justice for wrongs there perpetrated. Either great or petty causes of irritation are continually arising with the colonial dominions on the north of us. Their semi-independent condition encourages a freedom of action sometimes in conflict with our rights and interests, but without the authority, however willingly disposed, to assure us relief or remedy by treaty. Our future relations with this "dominion" will cause—already cause—anxiety to thoughtful American statesmanship, from which there now appears no certain issue, except in its independence. Our increasing settlements and interests on the Northern Pacific coast bring British Columbia still more forcibly within the scope of these considerations.

It should require no urgency to awaken our Government to the endless complications which would arise from the intrusion of European control in Central America, within the range of the coming trans-isthmian communications. To suggest control there by a naval power of Europe, is to suggest war with the United States. The connecting water-line between our Atlantic and Pacific coasts can, no more than the Pacific Railroad, be allowed

to come under European control. The communication should be opened on a line approved by the United States, by a company chartered by, or with the formal approval of, the United States, and sanctioned by the local government; constructed, if necessary, by the financial aid of the United States; and opened on equal terms to the use of all foreign nations, but under the control of none of them. The charter should provide that none of the proprietary rights of the company should ever be transferred to any foreign government, nor any lien upon its rights, franchises, or possessions be conveyed, directly or indirectly, to any foreign government. No chance should be left to convert a weak Central American state into another distracted Egypt, by means of foreign possessory rights in another isthmian canal.

Let us revive the doctrine, not the declaration, of President Monroe's administration, in the light of later experience and of wider development of interests. The time is most favorable. Our foreign relations are universally amicable. Our domestic prosperity and contentment frees the Government from anxious interior cares. Our finances are well ordered and satisfactory. We can freely turn our eyes abroad, not for aggressive action, but for peaceful and secure development. We can tranquilly determine our policy upon the questions under review, and inquire whether we ought not to advance from the earlier declaration, made by the President sixty years ago, when we had no Pacific coast, to a position and to action more conformable to our present condition and interests, and to the present ambitions of other governments. For our own territory, or for our political system—defended by fifty millions of people devoted to it, and ready to spring to arms for its defense—we fear nothing. The sentiment of monarchy toward popular republics has radically changed. Liberty has advanced eastward with long strides, while despotism has receded to the borders of Asia. History, authority, reason, and existing conditions amply justify the formal declaration of the principle foreshadowed by Mr. Monroe's advisers. The United States could not witness with indifference the establishment on these American continents of any new military or naval position, in whatever way acquired, or of any new colony under European jurisdiction, or the transfer to any other European naval power of any existing colonial dependency.

It would not be proper to disclose here all the reasons which urge us to the early and resolute adoption of this principle, and to the preparation of all needful means for its enforcement. If

not now formulated and declared, it should be accepted by our statesmen, not as a topic for academical discussion or stump oratory, but as a basis for firm and decisive action, and in full view of its possible consequences. None but the stupid can have failed to observe, in the history of British-American relations, a singular alternation of equitable and aggressive dispositions toward the interests of the United States—the latter, unfortunately, manifested in times of our trouble or weakness. Germany and France are strong rival commercial and aggressive powers. Both are seeking outlying positions of future advantage for commercial and military purposes. He is greatly mistaken who supposes that the rejection of the imperial dynasty by France has changed in this respect the spirit of the French governing classes. The sentiment which still dominates there is love of glory, and glory in foreign acquisitions: witness the present wild campaign in Africa. The French nation has no permanent alliances: witness the discordant clamor for friendship to-day with England, yesterday with Austria, now with Russia, then with Italy, or with the Sultan. Her friendships remain so long as they are tributary to her interests or to her glory. The simple fact of her adoption of republican institutions in no way changes for the future her policy of commercial extension and acquisition.

How much longer is our unobservant Congress to shut its eyes to the sagacious extension of the commercial lines and positions of foreign countries? How much longer are we to continue blind to the demands for new markets for our already excessive and rapidly increasing production? How much longer fail to seize opportunities for the wider distribution of our manufactures? If we have no oceanic lines under our flag leading to and by the positions which European governments covet, with what argument shall we meet them when they seek to establish themselves there? They may say to us: "Certainly, you entertain a sentiment that you have, or ought to have, a greater interest than we possess in these places; but we show you our flag there, our steamers, our traders,—where are yours?"

Let us implore Congress and the Executive to release themselves, in part, from interior political struggles, and to remember that it is the duty of statesmanship to anticipate the future. The farmer and manufacturer plant before reaping their profit. The United States have hitherto, for many years, refused to plant at all. One million dollars saved from ineffectual

interior improvements, or added to that expenditure if their importance is insisted upon, will open several new lines and markets to our agriculture and manufactures. Without it, our surplus will soon roll back from the Atlantic coast upon the interior, and the wheels of prosperity will be clogged by the very richness of the burden which they carry, but cannot deliver. Without it, European interests will seize and monopolize the points of greatest future importance to our safety and our commercial welfare. There are islands, and bays, and ports, and lines of communication which it may yet cost us a war to save to our interests, but which could now be peacefully saved. The tradition against the policy of outlying possessions is, at this stage of our history, simply imbecile. It belongs to a country of few resources, timid and trembling in presence of some great naval power. We have passed that stage of our existence. We are rapidly utilizing the whole of our continental territory. We must turn our eyes abroad, or they will soon look inward upon discontent. Touching the two great oceans which divide the world, this republic should, like the Roman Janus, have two faces, regarding both Europe and Asia, and the islands interposed. It is the duty, alike of her political interests and her wealth, to connect the waters of the two seas which embrace her coasts, and then to keep the connecting waters bright with her passing keels. The Spanish nations of this hemisphere are still hardly opened to the enterprise of our people. For the most part they can only be reached under a foreign flag, though the United States were the first to recognize their independence, to aid their development, and to defend their rights under the menace of war. For sixty years we have asserted our special interest in this hemisphere. To-day what flag dominates in its harbors and along its coasts? The answer is humiliating. It calls for a change of our passive policy into one of action, knitting more and more closely our union with our sister republics, and opening wide the doors to the commercial activity of our people. Then shall we have irresistible arguments to sustain our non-colonization policy, and ample returns for our wise and beneficent enterprise.

JOHN A. KASSON.